



Colonial Minuets

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Colonial Minuets

Five Minuets
and
Minuet Music

Compiled by Florence R. Signor

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COLONIAL MINUETS



The Minuet

Grandma told me all about it,
Told me so I could not doubt it,
How she danced, my grandma danced, long ago!
How she held her pretty head,
How her dainty skirts she spread,
How she turned her little toes,
Smiling little human rose!

Grandma's hair was bright and shining,
 Dimpled cheeks, too! ah! how funny!
 Bless me, now she wears a cap,
 My grandma does, and takes a nap every single day;
 Yet she danced the minuet, long ago;
 Now she sits there rocking, rocking,
 Always knitting Grandpa's stocking—
 Every girl was taught to knit long ago—
 But her figure is so neat,
 And her ways so staid and sweet,
 I can almost see her now,
 Bending to her partner's bow, long ago.

Grandma says our modern jumping,
 Rushing, whirling, dashing, bumping,
 Would have shocked the gentle people long ago.
 No, they moved with stately grace,
 Everything in proper place,
 Gliding slowly forward, then
 Slowly courtesying back again.

Modern ways are quite alarming, grandma says,
 But boys were charming—
 Girls and boys I mean, of course—long ago,
 Sweetly modest, bravely shy!
 What if all of us should try just to feel
 Like those who met in the stately minuet, long ago?

With the minuet in fashion,
 Who could fly into a passion?
 All would wear the calm they wore long ago.
 And if in years to come, perchance,
 I tell my grandchild of our dance,
 I should really like to say,
 We did it in some such way, long ago.

Mary Mapes Dodge.

At the close of the recitation the reciter may dance a few minuet steps, with musical accompaniment. It is a pretty idea to have soft music played throughout the recitation.

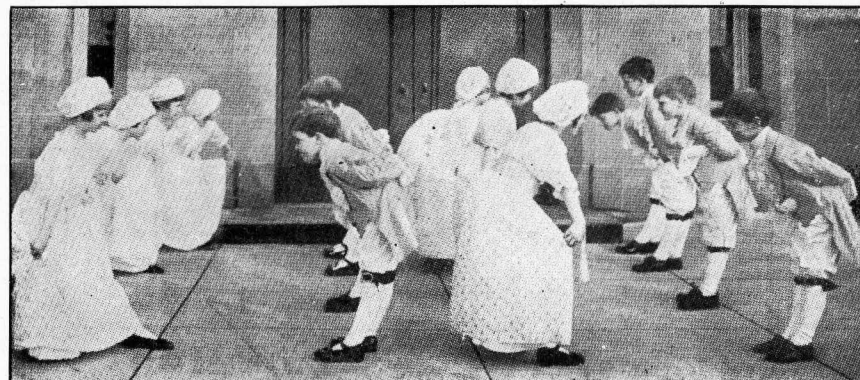
MINUET I

Any number of pupils can take part. The steps are simple but should be executed in a stately and graceful manner. The costumes and poses are shown in the accompanying photographs. Minuet music.

PART I—8 measures—16 counts.

Stand in rows, girls on right of boys. Girls hold skirts daintily with right hands, boys holding girls' left hands high with their right hands, left behind back.

Touch left heel forward, 1.



Bowing to Partners (Figure II)

Touch left toe backward, 2.

Change step left, 3—4.

Same exercise right, 5—8.

Drop hands and turn left about, grasp inside hands and repeat in opposite direction, 9—16.

Finish, facing front, as in the beginning

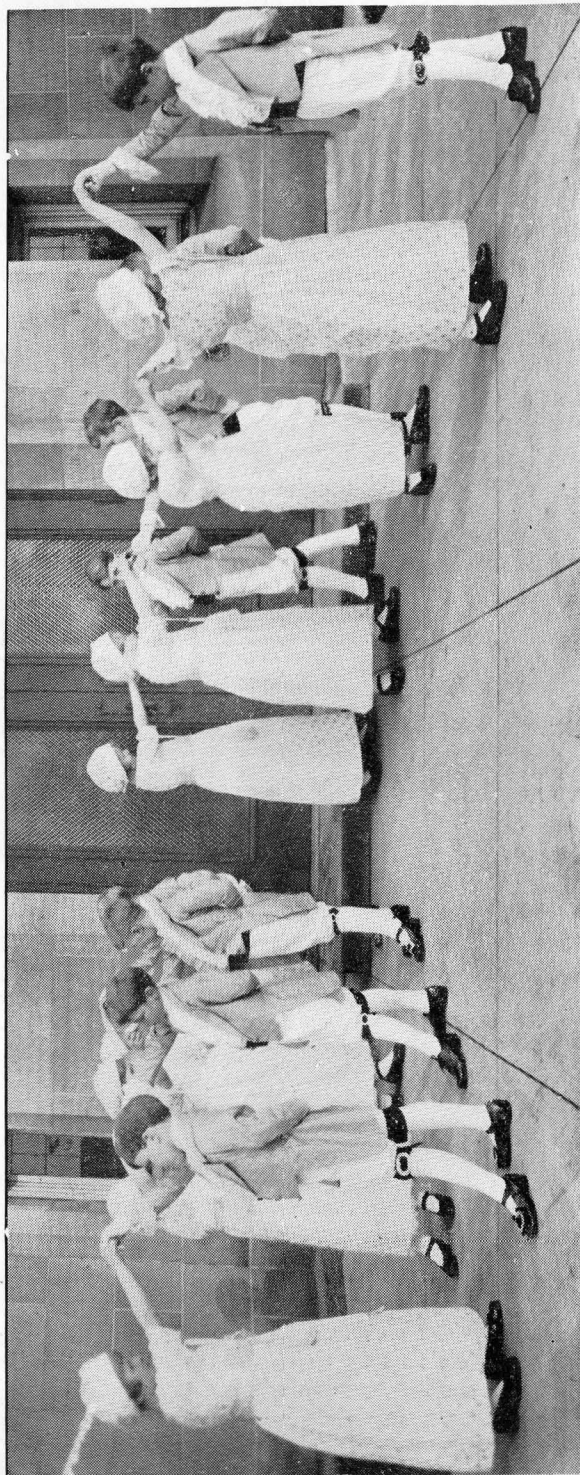
PART II—16 measures.

Same formaton as in Part I.

All step left sideward, 1.

Step right over left, 2.

Step left sideward, 3.



One of the Prettiest Movements (Figure I)

Step right foot behind left and bend both knees slightly (dip step), 4.

Same exercise right, 5—8.

Repeat, 9—16.

Repeat Part I, first 8 measures.

PART III—8 measures.

Partners facing, right hands joined and held high, girls' left hands holding skirts, boys' left behind back. (Fig. I)

All walk forward four steps, partners changing position. On fourth count turn about and make a slight bow.

Join left hands and repeat, four counts.

Boys take girls' left hands in their right, still facing each other. Boys step sideward left, girls sideward right (all toward front), 1.

Point step front with opposite foot, 2.

Boys step sideward right, girls sideward left, 3.

Point step, 4.

All turn about, away from partner, and make deep bow, girls holding skirts with both hands, boys with right hand across chest, left behind back. (Fig. II.) Retard least measure.

PART IV—8 measures.

Partners face and join right hands. Boys walk backward, girls forward, four counts. On fourth count bend knees slightly (dip step).

Repeat in opposite direction, four counts.

Drop hands, step sideward right and bow low, 1—2.

Step to position, heels together, not changing position of hands, 3—4.

Repeat bow to left, 5—6.

Step to position, 7—8.

Repeat whole dance.

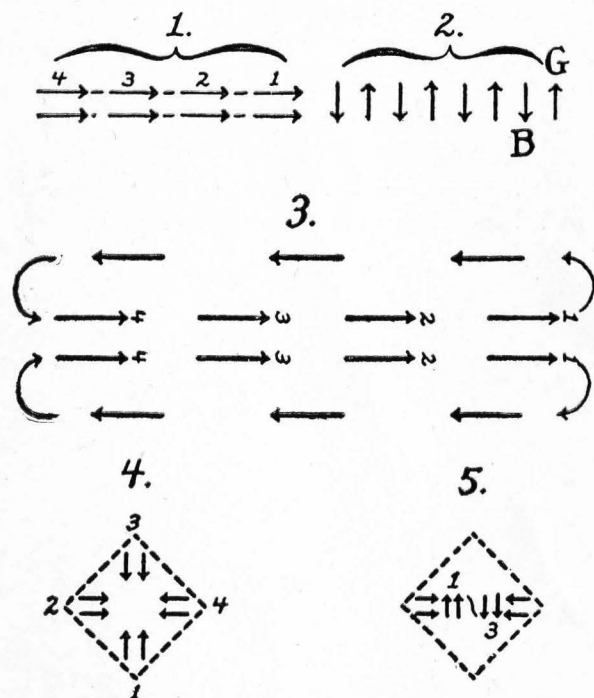
Bertha L. Swope.

MINUET II

Minuet music is used or a slow waltz. Eight children are required.

PART I

Four couples form a line at end of stage. (Diagram 1.) The girls are on the right side, holding dress daintily with right hand and partner's hand with left; hold inner hands high. The boys' left hands hang loosely by the side. All begin with left foot, taking one step forward, placing right foot behind left, and raising right heel and bending knees. This is done in two counts,



all counting 1, 2, etc. Take four steps like first and bow in ten counts, eight for the steps and two for the bow. Turn.

(In bowing, girls take hold of each side of their dress, draw left foot behind right, turning left foot outward and bowing

very slowly. Boys place left hand on breast, heels close together, toes out, bending body from the waist.)

Repeat the foregoing four times, twice up and twice across the stage, bowing each time as the eighth count is reached.

(The step is the same all the way through; always take step and place right foot, 1; bend knees, 2.)

PART II

Take two steps forward and bow. This is done to get the children in the center. Partners take hold of left hands, in two counts, each take one step forward. This forms a straight line, girls facing to the front, boys the back. (Diagram 2.) Again two counts; this time girls are in front of boys. Two counts and form a straight line, but girls are in the back and boys are in front. Two counts and back to places. Bow.

PART III

Left hand of girl and right hand of boy as for a march. Couples separate, girls to right, boys to left, march to other end of stage and down the center until original places are reached. (Diagram 3.) Bow. Girls' left hand and boys' left as in Part II. One step forward as in Diagram 2. One step back. Repeat twice. Bow. Repeat movement, right hands joined. Bow.

PART IV

Turn as in march. Form a diamond, couple one leading to left. In sixteen counts the diamond is formed. (Diagram 4.) Couple Four stands where Couple One stood when the march was formed. Bow on the eighteenth count. Couples One and Three step forward in four counts, forming a line between Couples Two and Four; form a wheel. This requires sixteen counts. Bow on eighteenth. Two and four do the same. Repeat, revolving the wheel twice.

PART V

Same diagram as in Part IV. Couples turn, boys on the inside, two steps in. Four boys take hold of hands again, forming a wheel. Revolve wheel in sixteen counts; on seventeen and eighteen turn and bow to partner. Repeat but go in opposite direction. Four counts, and couples are again in position of diamond. Turn and march in circle and off stage.

Louise Schlitz.

MINUET III

This little minuet requires only eight children. As originally given, it was presented by third grade pupils.

The music used is the "Minuet" by Boccherini, repeated as often as necessary. It should be played very slowly, for the dance is stately and graceful. Any hurried or jerky motions spoil its character.

The girls wear cotton wigs, long pink dresses with flowered panniers at the sides, and Watteau pleats attached at the back even with the shoulders; black velvet neck bands, white stockings, and black slippers with pasteboard buckles covered with tin foil or silver paper.

The boys wear cotton wigs tied with black ribbon, black coats with lace jabots and lace at the hands; white trousers, white



Two Couples Curtsying to Partners

stockings and black slippers with pasteboard buckles covered with tin foil.

The minuet step is used throughout. It is made by extending the right foot, tapping with the toe on one and two of the meas-

ure, drawing it back of the left and bowing on the third count, then taking three walking steps, beginning with the right foot, during the three counts in the second measure. This step may be practiced to the singing of words: right, right, bow; step, step, step; left, left, bow; step, step, step, until the children are thoroughly familiar with it and can do it slowly and gracefully. Great care must be taken lest the bow be slighted.

Then the curtsy will need special practice. In doing this, both boys and girls bow low, with right foot back of left and knee slightly bent. The girls extend skirts at sides and the boys place right hands over hearts and left hands at their backs.



Grand Right and Left

Whenever the dancers join hands they are held high.

The couples come on the stage in minuet step and form a hollow square, standing so that opposite couples are about twelve feet apart. Couples are numbered I, II, III and IV around the square.

The minuet is given as follows, the numbers after the dashes indicating the number of counts:

Curtsy to partner—6.

Curtsy at corners—6.

Figure 1.

Couples I and III advance to center—6.

Curtsy to opposite dancer—6.
 Back to position—6.
 Curtsy to partner—6.
 Couples II and IV repeat figure.

Figure 2.

Couples I and III to center—6 (left hands crossed and joined).
 Beginning with right foot, turn in circle—12.
 Turn in opposite direction, having right hands crossed and joined—12.
 Back to position—6.
 Curtsy to partner—6.
 Couples II and IV repeat figure.

Figure 3.

Girls to center—6.
 Turn and curtsy to partner—6.
 Back to position—6.
 Boys repeat figure.

Figure 4.

Girls to center—6.
 Proceed as in Figure 2.
 Boys repeat figure.

Figure 5.

Partners join right hands, pass and turn, facing each other—
 6.
 Repeat, having left hands joined—6.

Figure 6.

Boys to center—6.
 Join hands and hold high. (Space must be left for girls to pass inside the square thus formed.)
 Girls to center, around partner and back to position—12.
 Boys back to position—6.
 Girls to center—6.
 Repeat figure.

Figure 7.

Boys to center—6 (hands joined as before).
 Girls to center, turn to right, pass in and out around square and back to position.—30.

Girls to center—6.
 Boys repeat figure.

Figure 8.

Grand right and left. (Partners join right hands on three counts of the minuet step, then take three walking steps to second partner. The left hand is given to the second partner, right to third, etc. Continue until all have original partners.)

Curtsy to partner—6.
 Pass off stage in minuet step.

Edith Rank.

MINUET IV

COSTUMES

The boys' suits consist of knee breeches, white vest, long coat, white stockings, and black shoes with buckles covered with silver paper. The coats and vests may be made of sateen. Dainty



Dancers in Colonial Costume

lace is used in the sleeves and neck of the coat. The girls' dresses may be made of sateen or crepe paper, with panniers. Fichus made of dainty flowered muslin.

Wigs may be made as follows: Fit each child's head with a

cap of white cotton and on this sew cotton batting for a soft foundation, which may then be covered with raw wool. This is more easily covered than cotton and looks more like real hair.

THE DANCE

Eight, twelve, or sixteen may dance.

Stand in groups of fours.

Position: Partners holding hands high, girls hold skirt spread with right hand; boys carry left hand on hip. Right foot is pointed forward obliquely right.

Right foot 1-2-3. Advance left foot 1-2-3. Right foot 1-2-3, etc. three measures more. Bow low.

Grand Right and Left: Partners take right hands, pass to right 9 beats. Bow to partner. Reverse. Left hands back. Bow at places.

Right foot 1-2-3. On 3, right foot is placed back to make a bow. Left foot 1-2-3. Bow.

Wheel: Form a wheel by opposite partners grasping right hands. Pass to right. 9 beats. Bow.

Turn back to audience and repeat dance, moving toward back of stage. At close of dance bow to each other, then face audience and bow.

Margrete L. Petersen.

MINUET V

SETTING

Stage: Dark blue curtain. Flag in standard at right of stage. Park scene.

COSTUMES

Speaker: Dressed in soldier uniform of the George Washington period.

Boys. Black coat, trousers, slippers and hat. White stock, vest, stockings and jabots. Cockade same color as dress of girl partner. Hat to be pinned to right sleeve of coat near the hand.

Girls. Yellow, pink, blue and violet cheesecloth dresses in dainty colors, all made in empire style. Circular combs with ribbon rosettes to match the dress. White slippers and stockings.

FOREWORD

When the curtain rises, a little boy dressed like a soldier in Washington's time, steps forward and salutes the flag that is on a staff to the right of the stage. He then steps to the left and takes his stand "at attention," near the curtain, and recites the following poem, which is acted out by four little boys and four little girls.

The explanation of the movements that are to be carried out by the children, as designated by key numbers, are given following the poem.

(1) In days of old, when knights were bold,
And barons held their sway,
Lads and lassies in songs retold,
Held many a holiday.

And oft perchance when they would meet,
Then he would gravely bow, (2)
While she in answer coy and sweet,
Gave curtsy (3) neat, I trow.

Then from scabbard (4) flashed sword so bright,
And the hilt (5) to her hand he holds, (6)

Then she with touch (7) so quick and light,
Makes him (8) her knight (9) so bold. (10)

Now he salutes (11) his lady fair,
And (12) with measured step and slow, (13)
They dance (14) so gaily, free from care, (15)
In the days of long ago.

EXPLANATION OF KEY NUMBERS IN POEM

- (1) Boys enter from one side of stage and girls from the other; passing and repassing each other.
During first line of second verse couples come together.
- (2) Boys bow.
- (3) Girls curtsy.
- (4) Boys draw swords.
- (5) Boys give hilts of swords into girls' hands.
- (6) Boys kneel.
- (7) Girls touch boys on left shoulders with swords.
- (8) Girls return swords to boys, who place tips of swords in scabbards.
- (9) Boys push swords into scabbards.
- (10) Boys rise.
- (11) Boys raise right hands of girls and kiss them.
- (12) Right hand of boys and left hand of girls joined and raised to head level.
- (13) Couples take two steps in, bow and curtsy.
- (14) Two steps back, bow and curtsy.
- (15) Hands raised to position for dance.

The four couples now dance the minuet—arrangement as given below.

Music—Mozart's "Minuet."

MOVEMENTS OF THE MINUET

1. Couples march to center—6 counts.
2. Couples bow and curtsy—6 counts.
3. All take hold of hands.
4. Circle to the left—6 counts.
5. Couples curtsy and bow—6 counts.
6. Couples reverse and march back to first position—6 counts.
7. Couples bow and curtsy—6 counts.
8. Boys' right hands joined to girls' right, circle left—6 counts.

9. Couples bow and curtsy—6 counts.
10. Couples march to center—6 counts.
11. Boys draw swords and bring points together over the girls. Girls curtsy at same time—6 counts.
12. Boys lower swords and place points in scabbard. As the swords are replaced the girls curtsy again—6 counts.
13. Couples bow and curtsy—6 counts.
(1st movement and 2nd movement repeated)
14. Couples reverse and march back to 1st position—6 counts.
15. Couples bow and curtsy—6 counts.
16. Play peek-a-boo with uplifted hands, rights joined—6 counts.
17. Bow and curtsy.
18. Close of minuet—Each couple comes to place at front of stage, curtsys and bows to each other and then to audience.
Last movement of minuet used for close.

Maude B. Drake.

MINUET MUSIC

Minuet

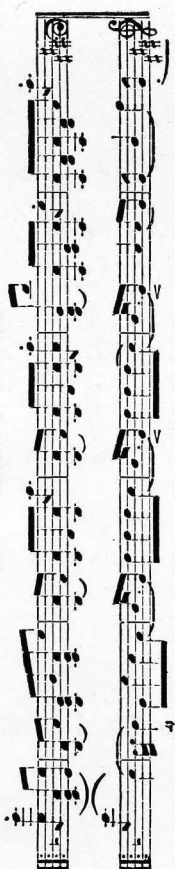


COLONIAL MINUETS

Boccherini's "Minuet"

In Minuet Time.

LUDICA BOCCHERINI



Mozart's "Minuet"

MOZART

Moderato